

Testimony of *John Valente*

Environmental Professional

in support of

Proposed Senate Bill No. 67:

An Act Concerning the Inclusion of Juices, Teas, and Sports Drinks under Connecticut's Bottle Bill

I would like to thank the Environment Committee, and Chairs Senator Edward Meyer and Representative Linda Gentile for allowing me to submit my testimony in support of Senate Bill 67, An Act Concerning the Inclusion of Juices, Teas, and Sports Drinks under Connecticut's Bottle Bill.

I have lived in Northeastern Ct for 36 years, my work history in CT includes; Chief of Environmental Health for a District Health Departments, past Chairman of the Windham County Soil and Water Conservation District, a member of my local Conservation Commission and I currently staff several municipal wetlands commission in the Northeast. My professional and personal life has been dedicated to safeguarding the public health of residents in my towns and the preservation and protection of natural resources, we all share. Again, I have an opportunity to urge CT lawmakers to take this, no small measure, to further our historic record of placing the health and well-being of CT residents and our environment above any perceived inconvenience. Certainly the "inconvenience" is wading through this waste in our rivers and lakes, breathing the pollution from the incineration of these recyclable plastics and drinking the contaminated ground water from which the waste has entered through the hydrological cycle. Public Health in CT has gone through a sea change in the last twenty years, the efforts and resulting legislation from the House and Senate have provided not only the necessary laws but have raised public awareness/education the single greatest tool to improving public health and well being.

Currently, the Bottle Bill covers beer, soda, and water with a 5-cent redeemable deposit that incentivizes recycling. However, unfortunately the last update in 2009, which added water, did not include the litany of other beverages like teas, sports drinks, juices, energy drinks, coffee-based beverages. This bill would correct some of that but not all. We should update the Bottle Bill and SB 67 is currently a good first step, but it can be and should be made better!

I support updating the Bottle Bill

In conclusion, I urge the Environment Committee to strengthen SB 67 and then pass it onto the Connecticut General Assembly. This is a good bill for Connecticut.

Thank you again for this opportunity to contribute testimony.